

From: Gaylord Holder
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 12:45pm
Subject: Microsoft vs. DOJ Settlement

I have been a computer professional for more than 20 years, working for the US Air Force, several universities, and private companies.

When I began, Microsoft, and Microsoft products were an island of stability in the confusing chaos of PCs. By buying the operating system and office suite from the same company, one often got a more stable machine than one might have getting DR-DOS, and Word Perfect.

I liked those early versions of MS-Word, and Excel.

Soon, I began hearing that Microsoft wasn't fixing bugs -- not just in Word, or Excel, but in more important things -- such as the compiler, or communications drivers. Developers I worked with refused to use Microsoft products because they were buggy and crashed their systems.

In the '90's I started having first hand experience developing software with Microsoft products. I soon found I could triple my productivity if I developed the software on Unix platform and back ported the code to PCs. The Microsoft development environment provided no way to integrate a 3rd party editor, no way to track revisions to the code, the debugging was primitive and often wrong, and the compiler often didn't work as documented. All of these problems had to be dealt with under Unix 5-7 years previously. It was a toy development environment.

Since then, Microsoft has increased its presence in my professional life. I am bombarded with MS-Word and MS-Excel attachments, my customers are required to use MS-Windows to do their jobs. At every turn, I have consistently found Microsoft software to be buggy, bloated, insecure, and difficult to administer.

For the last 10 years of my professional life, Microsoft products have consistently demonstrated the function of their software is not to help my user's do their jobs, but to promote Microsoft and its commercial partners. Whether it is the Internet Connection Wizard plugging Microsoft's Email accounts, or SmartTags trying to push browsers to Microsoft sites, Microsoft doesn't care for the person or business who bought their products, only their next source of revenue.

Microsoft has been proven to be a monopoly. It should be treated like one. Splitting the company into operating systems, applications, and networking, would break the costly, and wasteful cycle of having to upgrade the OS to run Microsoft Office and having to upgrade Microsoft Office to run on the new OS. Most of all, it would certainly Microsoft

Office make compete with other Office suites on technical terms. It would certainly force Microsoft to listen to its customers in a way I haven't seen it do since the early 1980s, and it could well let loose a new wave of computer innovation.

Sincerely,

Gaylord Holder